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RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHNC #0125 0311353
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 311353Z JAN 06
FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5474
INFO RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 0377
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 4524
RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 3479
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 0152

UNCLAS NICOSIA 000125

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DS/IP/EUR, DS/IP/ITA, AMMAN FOR RMO, CAIRO FOR RMO/P

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: KFLU ASEC AMED CY
SUBJECT: EMBASSY NICOSIA EAC - 30 JANUARY 2006 - AVIAN FLU
UPDATE

REF: NICOSIA 116

¶1. (SBU) On January 30, 2006, the DCM convened Embassy Nicosia's EAC to brief the Ambassador and review current conditions in response to a confirmed case of the H5N1 found in the area controlled by Turkish Cypriots. Also discussed were actions the Embassy will take as a result of the confirmed cases and a review of Greek Cypriot actions concerning the discovery of a dead raptor on the Embassy compound. The meeting was attended by the AMB, DCM, RSO, DAO, PAS, CONS, MGT, ECON, OSC (formally FBIS), USAID and RA.

¶2. (SBU) Economic Section briefed that on January 29, the H5N1 virus was confirmed in two samples of a chicken and turkey. The virus was confirmed by the EU reference laboratory at Weybridge in the UK. Over 1,200 birds have been destroyed and buried and extra precautions have been extended to all villages within 10km of the affected area. There are no plans at this point to close down any of the checkpoints.

¶3. (SBU) The Consular Section drafted an updated Warden message that was released on January 30. The Embassy plans to invite Wardens to a Town Hall meeting with the RMO from Amman on Wednesday, February 8, at the Embassy. The Consular Section is planning on other outreach programs with American citizens at schools and universities both in the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities.

¶4. (SBU) On January 30, at approximately 0720, ARSO received a report from Post One that a dead bird was found inside the Chancery compound directly outside of the East hardline door. The guards were instructed to cordon off the area. Cyprus' Veterinary Services was contacted and a veterinary doctor was dispatched to the Embassy to retrieve the bird and conduct preliminary testing. The bird was removed and the area was decontaminated. The area was reopened on January 31. Results concerning the cause of death of the bird are expected in three to four days.

¶5. (SBU) EAC concluded all precautions currently in place are sufficient. Should events dictate a more stringent approach to the way the embassy conducts business, the EAC will meet to decide further precautionary actions.

SCHLICHER